



CITY COUNCIL

Meeting Agenda

***REGULAR MEETING
HYBRID MEETING***

***MONDAY, AUGUST 9, 2021
at the conclusion of the COW Meeting***

The Regular Meetings of City Council are filmed and can be viewed LIVE while the meeting is taking place or at your convenience at <https://www.readingpa.gov/content/city-council-video>. All electronic recording devices must be located behind the podium area in Council Chambers and located at the entry door in all other meeting rooms and offices, as per Bill No. 27-2012.

Due to COVID-19, the public is prohibited from attending the meeting. To attend the meeting via our virtual app, please log in using the link below or watch on Facebook Live @ ReadingCityCouncil.

Join from a PC, Mac, iPad, iPhone or Android device:

Please click this URL to join.

<https://readingpa.zoom.us/j/87009909745?pwd=enl6UVViWnd3WUxERGNTYU1lc25kQT09>

Passcode: 086003

Or One tap mobile:

+16465588656,,87009909745#,,,,*086003# US (New York)

+13017158592,,87009909745#,,,,*086003# US (Washington DC)

Or join by phone:

Dial(for higher quality, dial a number based on your current location):

US: +1 646 558 8656 or +1 301 715 8592 or +1 312 626 6799 or +1 720 707 2699 or +1 253 215 8782 or +1 346 248 7799 or 888 475 4499 (Toll Free) or 877 853 5257 (Toll Free)

Webinar ID: 870 0990 9745

Passcode: 086003

Public comment can be offered by telephone or virtual meeting application by registering with the City Clerk at 610 655 6205 by noon on the day of the business meeting or in writing through an email to council@readingpa.gov or a letter mailed to the Council Office clearly marked "Public Comment". Written public comment must be submitted by 4:00 pm on day of the meeting to allow time to distribute the

comment submitted. The written comment received will be read into the record. Comments posted in Zoom Chat and on Facebook are not considered public comment and a response may not occur.

1. OPENING MATTERS

A. CALL TO ORDER

B. INVOCATION: Crystal Tapia-Feet On The Street Ministry

C. PLEDGE TO THE FLAG

D. ROLL CALL

E. EXECUTIVE SESSIONS: There were no executive sessions conducted during or after the July 26th or August 2nd COWs

2. PROCLAMATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

3. PUBLIC COMMENT – AGENDA MATTERS:

Due to COVID-19 also known as the Coronavirus the public speaking requirements have been modified. Public comment can be offered by telephone or virtual meeting application by registering with the City Clerk at 610 655 6205 by noon on the day of the business meeting or in writing through an email to council@readingpa.gov or a letter mailed to the Council Office both clearly marked "Public Comment". Written public comment must be submitted by 4:00 pm on day of the meeting to allow time to distribute the comment submitted. The written comment received will be read into the record. Comments posted in Zoom Chat and on Facebook are not considered public comment and a response may not occur.

All remarks must be directed to Council as a body and not to any individual Council member or public or elected official in attendance. Any comment that is personally offensive or impertinent will not be read into the record. Comments on agenda matters are limited to 5 minutes in length and comments on non-agenda matters are limited to 3 minutes in length.

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA & MINUTES

A. AGENDA: Meeting of August 9, 2021

B. MINUTES: July 26th Regular Meeting, and approving the summations of discussion from the July 26th and August 2nd COW meetings and the August 2nd Nomination Committee meeting

5. Consent Agenda Legislation

The Consent Agenda is designed to provide efficient approval of non-controversial legislation that does not require discussion/debate by giving approval via acclimation when the meeting agenda is approved. The President of Council will call Council's attention to the list of Consent Agenda legislation at the meeting before action is taken, which allows Council to remove a piece of legislation for separate consideration.

A. Resolution - authorizing the purchase of twenty-five (25) laptop computers for the Information Technology Division from COSTARS Vendor SCW – Southern Computer Warehouse, in the amount of \$42,253.75.

6. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Written report attached.

7. REPORT FROM OFFICE OF THE AUDITOR

Written report attached.

8. REPORT FROM DEPT. DIRECTORS, BOARDS, AUTHORITIES, & COMMISSIONS

9. ORDINANCES FOR FINAL PASSAGE

A. Bill 54-2021– amending the City Code by adding a new Chapter 433 Public Art and to establish a process for the City to consider short-term public art projects that will effectively enliven neighborhoods and create outcomes such as safety, livability, walkability, health, and economic development in City neighborhoods ***Introduced at the June 28 regular meeting; Advertised on July 5; Tabled at the July 12 and July 26 regular meetings***

B. Bill 60-2021 – amending City Code Chapter 23 Boards and Commissions, Part 1201 Downtown Revitalization Public Private Partnership, Section 23-201 authorization by replacing the DID Chair with the City of Reading Designated Downtown Coordinator ***Introduced at the July 26 regular meeting***

C. Bill 61-2021 – directing the Berks County Board of Elections to place a referendum question before city voters on the 2021 General Election Ballot which would amend the City of Reading Home Rule Charter by eliminating the requirement for the City's Public Works Director to be an engineer ***Introduced at the July 26 regular meeting***

10. INTRODUCTION OF NEW ORDINANCES

A. Ordinance – authorizing the transfer of \$10,000 from Reading Beautification to the PW Sustainability & Solid Waste General Plant Supplies to provide funds for cleanup/graffiti supplies for city clean-ups.

B. Ordinance –

11. RESOLUTIONS

A. Resolution -

12. PUBLIC COMMENT – GENERAL MATTERS

Please see public speaking rules on second page

13. COUNCIL BUSINESS/COMMENTS

14. COUNCIL MEETING SCHEDULE

Monday, August 9

Committee of the Whole – 5 pm

Regular Meeting – immediately following the Committee of the Whole meeting

Monday, August 16

Nominations & Appointments Committee – 4 pm

Committee of the Whole – 5 pm

Monday, August 23

Committee of the Whole – 5 pm

Regular Meeting – immediately following the Committee of the Whole meeting

Tuesday, September 21

Conditional Use Hearings – 5 pm

- 234 N 6th – Road to Damascus – temporary women's shelter
- 238 N 6th – Road to Damascus – boarding house

Oct 19 or 21

Conditional Use Hearing – 730 McKnight - group home – 5 pm

16. ADJOURN

City of Reading City Council
Hybrid Regular Meeting
July 26, 2021
At the conclusion of the COW Meeting

Council President Waltman called the meeting to order at approximately 7:24 pm.

Due to COVID-19, the City was forced to change the meeting format to a hybrid format and prohibit the public's ability to physically attend the meeting and for public comment to be provided through alternative methods. Public comment can occur in writing (email message or letter clearly marked for public comment) or via a telephone or internet connection with the virtual app. Comments posted in Zoom Chat and on Facebook are not considered public comment and a response may not occur. City officials are participating remotely and in-person. The meetings can be viewed live on the BCTV MAC Channel 99, Facebook Live or on the City's website at <https://www.readingpa.gov/content/city-council-video>.

Council President Waltman gave the invocation.

All present pledged to the flag.

There were no executive sessions held during or after the COWs on July 19th or July 26th.

ATTENDANCE

Council President Waltman – in person
Councilor Sihelnik, District 1 – in person
Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz, District 2 – in person
Councilor Ventura, District 3 – in person
Councilor Marmarou, District 4 – in person
Councilor Reed, District 5 – in person
Councilor Cepeda-Freytiz, District 6 - electronically
Solicitor F. Lachat – electronically
City Clerk L. Kelleher – in person
Auditor M. Rodriguez – electronically

PROCLAMATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

A commendation was issued celebrating Urban Ag Week, accepted by Dean Druckenmiller, Executive Director of Berks County Conservation District.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Council President Waltman announced that there is one (1) citizen who is connecting to the meeting via telephone about non-agenda matters.

Councilor Reed read the public speaking rules adopted by Council ordinance.

Curt VanBuskirk, of Garnet Valley, described the long-standing property maintenance problems in the 100 block of North 4th Street and West Green Street. Photos provided by Mr. VanBuskirk were displayed to Council. He stated that since 2013 he has been submitting complaints to the City about these problem properties and attempting to speak with the property owners asking them to mitigate these quality of life problems. The problems range from 18 illegal vehicles on an off-street lot, overflowing dumpsters to a vehicle parked at the curb with no doors and stuffed with trash. He noted that these problems are larger than a \$25 Quality of Life fine and he stressed the need for a more aggressive Property Maintenance Division.

Council agreed with the need for more aggressive actions to counter these problems that deteriorate neighborhoods and discourage pride in neighborhoods. The attractive nuisance dangers associated with the vehicle with no doors and filled with trash were noted. They also questioned why these problems have not been rectified over the past eight (8) years.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA & MINUTES

Council President Waltman called Council's attention to the agenda for this meeting, including the legislation listed under the Consent Agenda heading, and the minutes from the July 12th Regular Meeting, the meeting summaries from the COWs held on July 12th and July 19th and the meeting summary from the July 19th Nominations meeting.

The minutes from the July 12th Regular Meeting, the summations of discussion listed and the agenda were approved by acclamation.

Consent Agenda

The Consent Agenda is designed to provide efficient approval of non-controversial legislation that does not require discussion/debate by giving approval via acclamation when the meeting agenda is approved. The President of Council will call Council's attention to the list of Consent Agenda legislation at the meeting before action is taken, which allows Council to remove a piece of legislation for separate consideration.

A. Resolution 71-2021 – authorizing the Managing Director to sign and submit the attached “Traffic signal Maintenance Agreement”, to submit future modifications to the attached Traffic Signal Maintenance Agreement, and to submit future Applications for Traffic Signal Approval to PennDOT

B. Award of Contract – for the Angelica Park ADA Improvements Project to Columbia Excavating, Berwick, PA in the amount of \$162,986.21

C. Award of Contract – for the Pagoda Access Modifications Project to close the Pagoda parking lot to vehicular traffic during nighttime hours and maintain two-way traffic on Skyline Drive to Barwis Construction, Birdsboro, PA in the amount of \$160,344.00

D. Resolution 72-2021 – appointing Donna Reed as the Council representative to the America250PA Berks County Commission

E. Resolution 73-2021 – authorizing the purchase of a 1 stakebody with chassis for the Public Works Parks Division from Manderbach Ford in the amount of \$85,034.84

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

The managing director read the report provided in writing and attached to the agenda, in summary:

FROM THE MAYOR:

- Mayor Eddie Moran participated in a press event alongside HUD and HHS Department officials on June 29th to announce a joint agency effort to increase access to COVID-19 prevention and treatment services in underserved and vulnerable communities, such as HUD-assisted households and those experiencing homelessness. The event highlighted the availability of COVID-19 vaccines at federally qualified health centers like the Berks Community Health Center and how residents can access them.
- On July 6th, Mayor Moran participated in the groundbreaking ceremony for the Pedestrian Safety and Bike Trail project. The City collaborated with 18th WONDER neighborhood group on this project, which utilizes a \$725,000 multi-modal grant award.
- Mayor Moran toured the Animal Rescue League facility and met with the organization’s leadership team on July 15th. The ARL described their work in the city, specifically their medical and animal control teams’. The Administration will work with them on some outreach ideas to educate the community in canine parvovirus they have recently seen in the city and promote vaccination.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:

- The Community Development Department has completed the Lead Hazard Reduction grant application which was submitted as part of the 2022 Housing Urban Development grant (lead base paint LBP). The application was supported by 14 letters from various leaders in our community, such as Senator Toomey, Senator Schwank, Congresswoman Houlahan, State Representative Rozzi, and Guzman, in addition to County Commissioners and GRCA representatives.

- The CD Department has also begun developing remediation plans with the assistance of the PA Department of Health (PaDOH). An initial budget was given of \$127,500 for lead removal and \$25,000 for healthy homes. A list of contractors that can conduct risk assessments, inspect and remediate was developed as part of this pilot program. We are also collaborating with Berks Community Health Center (BCHC) to inform families with children under the age of six, who have elevated blood levels to contact the City, and with Berks Community Action Program (BCAP) to assist in the weatherization of properties with known high lead concentration.
- The Property Maintenance Division of CD is continuing to carry out education and enforcement action plans. As of July 15th, Property Maintenance Inspectors have issued 905 Notice of Violations, 157 Residential Rental Unit Inspections, and discovered 29 illegal rental units. In addition, Health Officers inspected 28 Health Service Commercial Facilities, and made two court appearances. These activities average to 42 actionable tasks per Property Maintenance Inspector.

FINANCE:

- The Finance Department Information Technology Division migrated all users to the new email server on Thursday, July 15th through the 18th. Shared mailboxes, public folders, and some resource mailboxes are still in the process of migration. It is in preparations to change to external IP address change next.
- The Finance Department IT Division is also beginning the testing phase for Microsoft 365.
- The Finance Department Citizen's Service Center mailed letters on July 14th to 1,810 properties indicating to the owners that the conversion to City trash service is underway. Currently, 805 accounts are due to expire at a later date. This number is expected to see a slight increase as we receive additional contracts that date back prior to the change. New letters will be sent as the expiration of those contracts approach.
- The Finance Department's CSC confirmed Keystone Collections mailed 2021 Per Capita Tax bills, which went into effect on July 1st.
- The Finance Department's Accounting Division has begun working on the 2022 draft budget. All City departments and divisions have received templates to begin discussions.
- The Finance Department's Grant Division has the following grant updates:
 - USDOJ 2021 Justice Assistance Grant application:
 - The grant is for \$63,303 to be used towards Police Officer overtime hours concentrating on problem-oriented policing, special details, and officer training for National Incident-based Reporting System data collection and reporting, as required. The application submission is still expected to occur on August 9th.
- The Finance Department held a kick-off meeting for the defined contribution plan scheduled to go live on October 1st. The City is working with Conrad Seigel on this plan, a mandatory Act 47 implementation item that will affect all newly hired non-uniform full-time employees. New employees will be automatically enrolled in a defined contribution plan, with a City match contribution that is vested after three years of service. Employees currently enrolled in the City's defined benefit plan will not be impacted.

FIRE:

- The Fire Department 9th & Marion Street Station project currently has the construction RFP out for bid. There is an on-site pre-bid meeting scheduled on August 2nd with proposals due on August 24th. RFD is hopeful to have a contract ready to go before City Council by September 13th and groundbreaking on October 4th.

HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION:

- As of July 16th, HRC has:

- 979 total rent and utility assistance applications were received (an addition of 3 applications since last reported).
 - 962 applications for rental assistance
 - 629 applicants were facing eviction
 - 245 applicants were not actively facing eviction
 - 88 applicants resided outside of the City but within the County.
 - 17 applications for utility assistance

POLICE:

- The Reading Police Department's multi-agency Operation Cease Fire detail on July 8th resulted in 24 additional arrests and four firearm seizures.
- RPD successfully completed a second homeless outreach operation in collaboration with the Homeless Coalition. The outreach operation focused on reaching homeless persons in City parks and playgrounds. These outreach operations will continue every other week at various locations throughout the City.
- The RPD is hosting National Night Out on August 3rd. The event will take place on the 500 block of Penn Street from 5pm to 8pm, with various government and community agency groups participating. This event is a fun and safe time for the community to enjoy food, music, various presentations, and get to know our first responders.
- The RPD Police Academy has moved from Alvernia's main campus to Alvernia University's Upland Center. The new location provides more office and classroom space for the Academy to utilize.

PUBLIC WORKS:

- The Public Works Department has outfitted and properly insured a new aerial bucket truck for the City electrician to use.
- PW Sewers team has cleaned the Spring Street Storm Sewer System (the subway). The work was completed in one day, including cleaning the storm laterals and replacing a broken catch basin grate.
- PW Streets staff filled an additional 227 potholes in the month of June.
- PW Streets crews continue to assist in the success of Wacky Water Wednesdays by street sweeping all sites before the start of the events.

Councilor Cepeda-Freytiz inquired about how the City updates its Per Capita Tax records annually to capture those who have turned 18 years of age. The managing director stated that this question will be referred to the finance director.

Councilor Cepeda-Freytiz inquired about the municipal trash RFP due date, as the contract expires at the end of this year. The Solicitor stated that the bids are due back on September 10th. The Deputy Public Works Director stated that the former RFP was streamlined with improved terms and requirements, which should help to reduce the overall cost from the bid received last year.

Councilor Cepeda-Freytiz questioned when the Junior Police Academy would begin. The Police Chief stated that the department is working to reinstate this program.

Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz reminded the group of the need to restart efforts to out-source the crossing guard program. The managing director stated that the mayor's office had a recent talk with the Reading School District about this need.

AUDITOR'S REPORT

The Auditor highlighted the report attached to the agenda and distributed electronically. In summary:

Water Authority Audit

A copy of the 2020 audit report for the Reading Area Water Authority, one of the City's Component Units, was received by the office of the City Auditor on June 15, 2021 via email. And after reviewing the financial Statements, this audit report illustrates the following (see table 1):

- The Total Net Position which is the Total Assets/Deferred Outflow of Resources minus Total Liabilities that include Current Liabilities and Long-Term Debt, reflects an increase of \$1,875,761.
- The Authority Total Liabilities show a decrease of \$3,737,269.
- In 2020, The Authority has an Operating Income of \$3,653,656 compared to \$3,556,133 in 2019, and it ended with an increase of \$97,523.
- In March of 2020, RAWA refinanced the bonds, Series 2011, and as a result the Interest Expense line item was reduced to \$ 2,194,472 in 2020 from \$3,768,727 in 2019, and this was the main reason that caused the increase of \$1,875,761 in Net Position compared to \$598,104 in 2019.

Table 1

	2020	2019	2020 vs 2019
Total Assets/Deferred Outflow of Resources	95,232,756	97,094,264	(1,861,508)
Total Liabilities	78,796,115	82,533,384	(3,737,26)
Total Net Position	16,436,641	14,560,880	1,875,761
Operating Income	3,653,656	3,556,133	97,523
Increase In Net Position	1,875,761	598,104	1,277,657

Real Estate Transfer Tax Revenue - Update as of June 30, 2021

For the month of June of the current year, the City collected \$719,042.39 in revenue for Real Estate Transfer Tax, and as of June 30, 2021, a total of \$4,122,096.93 has already been received which is 88% of total amount budgeted. For the first six months of the current year, a total of 1,283 transactions for Real Estate Transfer Tax has been completed of which 1,077 transactions were taxable and 206 were not taxable transactions.

2020 Fire Escrow Audit

The Fire Escrow audit has been completed by the Office of the City Auditor and it was presented today at the 5pm meeting. As previously stated, the Fire Escrow account has a liability of \$766,883.41 as of December 31, 2020.

REPORT FROM DEPT. DIRECTORS, BOARDS, AUTHORITIES, & COMMISSIONS.

Council President Waltman introduced Electrical Inspector Jeff Bower.

Mr. Bower stated that the Electrician’s Examination Board currently has no vacancies. The Board completed the required 3rd quarter testing in July.

Councilor Cepeda-Freytiz inquired about the Board’s outreach to assist electricians who need to identify further educational opportunities, as there are no training facilities located within Berks County. Mr. Bower stated that he is unaware of the need for any continued training for master electricians.

Councilor Marmarou inquired if Board members are required to be Master level electricians. The City Clerk stated that all Trades Board members (Electrical, HVAC and Plumbing) are required to have a Masters license.

ORDINANCES FOR FINAL PASSAGE

A. Ordinance 54-2021– amending the City Code by adding a new Chapter 433 Public Art and to establish a process for the City to consider public art projects that will effectively enliven neighborhoods and create outcomes such as safety, livability, walkability, health, and economic development in City neighborhoods

Councilor Sihelnik moved, seconded by Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz, to table Bill No. 54- 2021.

The motion to table Bill No 54-2021 was approved by the following vote:

Yeas: Cepeda-Freytiz, Goodman-Hinnershitz, Marmarou, Reed, Ventura, Sihelnik, Waltman, President – 7

Nays: None – 0

B. Bill 55-2021 – amending Administrative Code Section 5-208 Rules of Procedure by defining a quorum and remote participation at meetings

Councilor Marmarou moved, seconded by Councilor Cepeda-Freytiz, to enact Bill No. 55-2021.

Council President Waltman explained that this amendment establishes policy on remote participation at Committee of the Whole (COW) meetings, regular meetings and other Council sessions.

The motion to table Bill No 55-2021 was enacted by the following vote:

Yeas: Cepeda-Freytiz, Goodman-Hinnershitz, Marmarou, Reed, Ventura, Sihelnik, Waltman, President – 7
Nays: None – 0

C. Bill 56-2021 – amending Administrative Code Section 5-209 Public Participation by providing citizens with the ability to continue to submit written public comment

Councilor Reed moved, seconded by Councilor Ventura, to enact Bill No. 56- 2021.

The motion to table Bill No 56-2021 was approved by the following vote:

Yeas: Cepeda-Freytiz, Goodman-Hinnershitz, Marmarou, Reed, Ventura, Sihelnik, Waltman, President – 7
Nays: None – 0

D. Bill 57-2021 – establishing a No Parking Zone in the 200 block of Chestnut St to eliminate traffic concerns at the Remcon building

Councilor Marmarou moved, seconded by Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz, to enact Bill No. 57- 2021.

The motion to enact Bill No 57-2021 was approved by the following vote:

Yeas: Cepeda-Freytiz, Goodman-Hinnershitz, Marmarou, Reed, Ventura, Sihelnik, Waltman, President – 7
Nays: None – 0

E. Bill 58-2021 – directing the County Board of Elections to place a referendum on the 2021 General Election Ballot to eliminate Charter Section 1110 Recall of Elected Officials as

the State Supreme Court has determined that local recall provisions are unconstitutional due to the removal process for elected officials provided in the State Constitution

Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz moved, seconded by Councilor Sihelnik, to enact Bill No. 58- 2021.

The motion to enact Bill No 58-2021 was approved by the following vote:

Yeas: Cepeda-Freytiz, Goodman-Hinnershitz, Marmarou, Reed, Ventura, Sihelnik, Waltman, President – 7

Nays: None – 0

F. Bill 59-2021 – directing the County Board of Elections to place a referendum on the 2021 General Election Ballot to amend Charter Section 1204 Amendments by making the correct citation to State Statute Title 53, Subchapter C Amendment of Existing Charter or Optional Plan through the County Board of Elections

Councilor Sihelnik moved, seconded by Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz, to enact Bill No. 59- 2021.

Council President Waltman explained that this amendment will provide the correct citation for those desiring to propose a Charter amendment.

The motion to enact Bill No 59-2021 was approved by the following vote:

Yeas: Cepeda-Freytiz, Goodman-Hinnershitz, Marmarou, Reed, Ventura, Sihelnik, Waltman, President – 7

Nays: None – 0

INTRODUCTION OF NEW ORDINANCES

Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz read the following ordinances into the record.

A. Ordinance – amending City Code Chapter 23 Boards and Commissions, Part 1201 Downtown Revitalization Public Private Partnership, Section 23-201 authorization by replacing the DID Chair with the City of Reading Designated Downtown Coordinator

B. Ordinance – directing the Berks County Board of Elections to place a referendum question before city voters on the 2021 General Election Ballot which would amend the City of Reading Home Rule Charter by eliminating the requirement for the City's Public Works Director to be an engineer

RESOLUTIONS

A. Resolution 74-2021 – making a \$3M contribution to the Convention Center to assist with the capital needs for the Convention Center and the SPAC

Councilor Marmarou moved, seconded by Councilor Sihelnik, to adopt Resolution 71-2021.

Councilor Reed stated that the convention center is a regional economic driver and due to the pandemic the Convention Center Authority needs some assistance meeting the capital needs of the facility, similar to the request made by the Fightin Phils. She noted that the County Commissioners authorized a \$3M commitment to assist with the needs of the convention center.

Councilor Sihelnik agreed, noting the benefits the convention center brings to downtown Reading.

Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz agreed that the convention center is a regional economic driver that supports many businesses here and elsewhere.

Council President Waltman stated that the convention center is an economic pillar for this region, like the Fightin Phils and FirstEnergy Stadium. He noted that despite all the naysayers who argued that the center would fail and attempted to block the center for numerous years, the center has been successful. He noted the importance of the center, especially with the effort to revitalize the downtown. He thanked the County Commissioners for also making a \$3M commitment to the convention center.

The motion to adopt Resolution 71-2021 was approved by the following vote:

Yeas: Cepeda-Freytiz, Goodman-Hinnershitz, Marmarou, Reed, Ventura, Sihelnik, Waltman, President – 7

Nays: None - 0

B. Resolution 75-2021 – appointing Michael McDevitt to HARB

C. Resolution 76-2021 – appointing Pamela Gockley to the Shade Tree Commission

Councilor Marmarou moved, seconded by Councilor Sihelnik, to adopt Resolutions 75-76-2021.

Councilor Marmarou noted the City's work to fill various openings on the City's Boards and the City's good fortune to find two skilled volunteers to fill these positions.

The motion to adopt Resolutions 75-76-2021 was approved by the following vote:

Yeas: Cepeda-Freytiz, Goodman-Hinnershitz, Marmarou, Reed, Ventura, Sihelnik, Waltman, President – 7

Nays: None – 0

COUNCIL COMMENT

Councilor Reed noted the recent Fire Graduation, she read the list of newly hired firefighters and noted the strenuous training they are required to go through. She announced that Whacky Water Wednesday will be at Kieffer Park this week.

Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz gave a shout-out to GK Elite Sportswear, located just past Reading's boundary on N. 13th Street. She stated that in addition to outfitting the US Olympics gymnastics team, they are also an Olympic sponsor. She stated that this company offers many walk to work jobs.

Councilor Sihelnik thanked the administration for taking the time to assist with many district issues.

Councilor Marmarou noted a severe increase in speeding and double parking in his district and he demanded an increased police patrol to cure this problem.

Council President Waltman reviewed the upcoming meeting schedule.

Councilor Marmarou moved, seconded by Councilor Reed, to adjourn the regular meeting of Council.

Linda A. Kelleher CMC, City Clerk

Drafted By: Finance
Referred by: Jamar Kelly
Introduced on: 08/09/2021
Advertised on:

RESOLUTION NO. ____ 2021

THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF READING HEREBY RESOLVES AS
FOLLOWS:

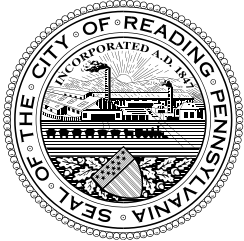
Authorizing the purchase of twenty-five (25) laptop computers for the Finance Department, Information Technology Division from COSTARS Vendor [Contract #003-441] SCW – Southern Computer Warehouse, in the amount of \$42,253.75.

Adopted by Council _____, 2021

President of Council

Attest:

Linda A. Kelleher
City Clerk



Administrative Report Mayor Eddie Moran

TO: City Council
FROM: Abraham Amorós, Managing Director
PREPARED BY: Maritza Loaiza, Special Assistant
MEETING DATE: August 9, 2021
AGENDA MEMO DATE: August 4, 2021

FROM THE MAYOR:

- Mayor Eddie Moran attended a press conference hosted by PA Agriculture Secretary Russell Redding on July 19th at the Goggleworks Center for the Arts. The press conference announced a \$10,000 grant award to the Goggleworks to install gardens that will provide food for local families, teach youth about agriculture, and provide them with hands-on opportunities.
- Mayor's Office representatives attended the back-to-school Covid-19 vaccination events at Northwest Middle School on July 23rd and Reading High School on July 30th. These events were part of a collaborative effort on behalf of the City, Reading School District, and Penn State Health Saint Joseph.
- On July 23rd, Mayor Moran attended the 2021 Fire Academy Graduation ceremony held at the Doubletree Hotel. The Mayor congratulated the graduates and provided certificates of recognition to recognize their accomplishments.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:

- The Community Development Department is preparing to receive Stantec's complete report summarizing their findings, recommendations along with the proposed

implementation process in mid-August. The Administration will review Stantec's report and prepare a presentation for City Council in September.

- The CD Department worked with Desman Design on the next phase of the Comprehensive Parking Study, which included public engagements. Four virtual public meetings were scheduled. The first two were scheduled last week on August 3rd, at 6 pm for those in the City's northwest area and August 4th for those in the City's northeast areas. The last two virtual meetings are scheduled for tomorrow, August 10th, at 6 pm for neighborhoods located in the southern area of the City and August 11th at 6 pm for the downtown area.
- The CD Department participated in a kick-off meeting with the federal office of Health and Human Services who awarded the City a grant to promote health awareness in minority communities. The City will collaborate with Penn State Health to develop a health awareness campaign promoting healthier lifestyles within minority communities.

FINANCE:

- The Finance Department Information Technology Division has completed the email server migration project.
- The Finance Department IT Division expects the new website should be ready to stand up on a cloud service within the next week or two.
- The Finance Department IT is installing new help desk software to help manage projects and tickets for users. The software will allow for improved network monitoring with sites that are down and allow for better performance monitoring.
- The Finance Department's Citizen Service Center continues to operate the dropbox in the 8th Street Lobby. A substantial number of envelopes are collected from the dropbox daily, which shows that the service is convenient for customers.
- The Finance Department continues to cross-train all new hires to allow for coverage in four different customer service areas within the department.
- The Finance Department staff continues to receive training in the new finance system, Tyler (Munis).

FIRE:

- The Fire Department 9th & Marion Street Station project held an on-site pre-bid meeting on August 2nd, with proposals due on August 24th. RFD is hopeful to have a contract ready to go before City Council by September 13th and groundbreaking on October 4th.
- The RFD is currently testing seven applicants for the non-fire paramedic positions.

HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION:

- As of August 2nd, HRC has:
 - 992 total rent and utility assistance applications were received (an addition of 13 applications since last reported).
 - 970 applications for rental assistance
 - 632 applicants were facing eviction
 - 249 applicants were not actively facing eviction
 - 89 applicants resided outside of the City but within the County.

- 22 applications for utility assistance

LIBRARY:

- The Reading Public Library Executive Director and strategic plan facilitator were guests on the *Circulating Ideas* podcast. They were also asked to submit an article to *Library Journal* on strategic planning post-Covid-19.
- The RPL Executive Director completed a seven-hour training on creating inclusive policies for equity, diversity, and inclusion.
- The RPL thanks the Wyomissing Foundation for their \$5,000 offer to reconcile patron's lost and damaged fees in recognition of their Fine Free Pilot Program.
- The RPL's new glass-walled meeting room at the Southeast branch is close to completion. Technology is currently being installed, and the project is set to be completed in the next few weeks. This project was funded by the Dr. Jerome Marcus donation of 2017.

POLICE:

- The Reading Police Department's multi-agency Operation Cease Fire has conducted 28 details as of August 2nd. These details have involved 565 law enforcement officers from numerous local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies.
 - The following are the results of Operation Cease Fire details:
 - 48 warrants served
 - 34 misdemeanor arrests
 - 32 felony arrests
 - 188 firearms seized
 - 201 home visits
 - Operation Cease Fire has decreased non-fatal shootings by 36 %, which has trended for the last six months.
 - Vice investigations have initiated 223 cases and executed 47 search warrants which have resulted in the following:
 - 54 arrests
 - 17 firearm seized
 - 20+ pounds of various narcotics seized
 - The US Marshals Task Force efforts have resulted in the following:
 - 97 arrests of fugitives in the City or in other jurisdictions that were wanted for crimes committed in the City.
 - The US Marshals Task Force continues to prioritize violent offenders
- RPD successfully completed another homeless outreach operation in collaboration with the Homeless Coalition. The outreach operation focused on reaching homeless persons in City parks and playgrounds. The latest outreach resulted in several individuals receiving medical assistance, temporary housing assistance, and referral to treatment programs.
- The RPD is hosted National Night Out on August 3rd. The event took place on the 500 block of Penn Street from 5pm to 8pm, with various government and community agencies participating.

- The RPD Police Academy has moved from Alvernia's main campus to Alvernia University's Upland Center. The new location provides more office and classroom space for the Academy to utilize.

CITY AUDITOR'S REPORT

Monday, August 9, 2021

2021 Cable Franchise Fees Revenue– Update as of 07/31/2021

For the current year, the City budgeted \$825,000.00 in revenue for the Cable Franchise Fees. Due to less revenue collected in previous years, \$50,000.00 less was budgeted in 2021 compared to 2020 budget. For the first two quarters of the current year, the City collected \$409,680.86 in revenue for this line item.

The chart below demonstrates that \$4,579.34 less in revenue has been collected during the first two quarters of this year compared to the first two quarters of 2020.

The chart below illustrates revenue collected from the Cable Franchise Fees

	6/30/2021	2020	2019	2018	2017
1 st Quarter	205,330.02	207,751.86	209,042.39	212,684.39	229,932.97
2nd Quarter	204,350.84	206,508.34	210,579.70	214,578.59	236,184.17
3er Quarter		203,557.64	199,517.55	208,734.78	224,527.59
4 th Quarter		200,679.36	204,481.07	214,925.66	223,161.86
TOTAL REVENUE	409,680.86	818,497.20	823,620.71	850,923.42	913,806.59
Total Budgeted	825,000.00	875,000.00	875,000.00	930,000.00	875,000.00
OVER/UNDER BUDGET	(415,319.14)	(56,502.80)	(51,379.29)	(79,076.58)	38,806.59

User Fees Revenue – Update as of 6/30/2021

For the current year, City budgeted \$3,009,500.00 for the User Fees Revenue line item and as of June 30, 2021, the City collected \$1,687,865.76 or 56% of total amount budgeted. If this revenue continue this trend for the rest of this year, it could be expected that the City will exceed the budget target for this revenue line item in 2021.

The Chart below explains the revenue collected YTD for the fiscal years of 2017 through 2021

	6/30/2021	12/31/2020	12/31/2019	12/31/2018	12/31/2017
USER FEES-EMS	1,687,865.76	2,405,142.53	3,333,157.10	2,808,204.15	2,912,755.52
BUDGET	3,009,500.00	3,196,000.00	3,095,000.00	2,900,000.00	2,900,000.00
OVER/UNDER BUDGET	(1,321,634.24)	(790,857.47)	238,157.10	(91,795.85)	12,755.52

Rental – Parking Authority (RPA) – 2021

Effective March 1, 2021, the City of Reading and the Reading Parking Authority entered into a Cooperation Agreement where the Reading Parking Authority will make an annual payment to the City in the amount of \$1,761,000.00.

Although the City only budgeted \$508,900.00 in revenue for this line item this year, as of July 31, 2021, the City has collected \$587,000.00 from the RPA due to the agreement. This amount reveals the payments from March through June of this year.

Since this agreement was not concluded until this year, the 2022 budget should reflect a more accurate budget for this line item.



CITY OF READING CITY COUNCIL

Brief

Item: Public Art Ord & Policy
From: Linda Kelleher
City Clerk
Briefing No.:
Date: July 19, 2021

SUBJECT: Creating a Public Art Chapter in the City Code to enable the installation of short term art projects in public spaces.

BACKGROUND: Need identified during consideration of rainbow crosswalk for Reading Pride. Identified similar municipal programs that enable individuals, groups and organizations to apply for permission to decorate crosswalks and sidewalks, murals or banners for a 2 year period. This program does not cover formal or long-term art installations.

KEY COMPONENTS:

- Modeled after programs used in other municipalities, nationally
- Includes review by HARB and Zoning where required. Murals and banners in Historic Districts may require separate HARB approval and murals may require separate Zoning approval.
- Provides flexibility to allow the review committee to consult with art experts
- Requires applicant to have the funds to create, maintain the installation and remove the installation at the end of the two year period
- Requires applicant to seek community input and support prior to application and encourages consultation with the Berks Arts Council
- Requires application fee for paint and other supplies that will be supplied by the City to meet the City's specifications (such as anti-skid paint for crosswalks and anti-graffiti protection for murals) and to cover any services the City must provide to assist with the installation
- Prohibits advertisements, logos, pornography, anything overtly political, or anything which imitates traffic signage. The design may not include any painting of the crosswalk markings. Projects approved by the committee must be approved by Council resolution

Drafted by: City Clerk
Referred by: Councilor Reed & Cepeda-Freytiz
Introduced on: June 28, 2021
Advertised on:

BILL NO. _____ 2021

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF READING BERKS
COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, AMENDING THE CITY CODE BY ADDING NEW
CHAPTER 433 PUBLIC ART**

**NOW, THEREFORE, THE CITY OF READING CITY COUNCIL HEREBY ORDAINS AS
FOLLOWS:**

SECTION 1: Amending the City Code by adding a new Chapter 433 Public Art, as follows:

**Chapter 433
Public Art**

§ 433-101. Purpose. Art of all types and experiences located in public places and open to all is a vital part of a creative **place-making** project when it is joined to a larger vision for community goals and for the community itself. The purpose of this Chapter is to establish a process for the City to consider public art projects that will effectively enliven neighborhoods and create outcomes such as safety, livability, walkability, health, and economic development.

§ 433-102. Evaluation and Approval of Public Art Applications

A. Any person, organization or entity wishing to place any artwork installation upon public property shall submit such proposal to the City Clerk's Office.

B. An internal Public Art Review Committee shall review each proposal. The Committee shall be composed of the Historic Preservation Specialist, a City Planner, the Public Works Operations Division Manager, the City Clerk, Traffic Sergeant or his representative. The Director of Public Works shall appoint a Chairperson from the membership.

C. The Public Art Review Committee shall provide a written evaluation of each proposal based on the following factors: the suitability and appropriateness of the proposed location for the installation; the proposers' plan and ability for maintenance and upkeep of the installation; and provisions for insuring the memorial against damage, vandalism and disrepair. In addition, if the proposed location of an art installation has been subject to a master or comprehensive-planning initiative, the proposed installation should be in comport with any such valid plan. The Review Committee shall provide this written evaluation to City Council with a recommendation.

D. At its discretion, the Public Art Review Committee may request the approval of or advice of the proposed art installation from the Planning Commission.

E. Any mural, banner, or other artwork installation proposed to be located within or immediately adjacent to a designated historic or conservation district shall be subject to the advance approval of the Historic Architectural Review Board.

F. Approval of the installation shall require the approval of City Council by resolution.

§ 433-103. Maintenance of Public Art

A. It shall be the policy of the City of Reading that the maintenance and upkeep of any art installation shall be the responsibility of the person or entity placing such approved art installation on any property for a minimum of two (2) years. A plan for the care and maintenance of the artwork, including graffiti abatement, and removal of the installation at the end of the two (2) year permit period or when directed to do so by the City of Reading Public Works Director.

B. In the event an art installation falls into disrepair and is not promptly repaired by the person or entity that installed it, the Director of Public Works, the City may provide written notice ordering the person or entity to remove the installation within 30 days. If the person or entity fails to remove the art installation or agree to a schedule for the removal of the artwork, approval of which is in the City's sole discretion, at the end of the two (2) year permit period or within the 30-day period on order of the Public Works Director, the City shall remove the installation at the person or entity's expense.

C. The Public Art Review Committee shall have purview over existing art installations and may promulgate policies and programs that improve this program with little or no public expense.

D. Vandalism to any art installation or the grounds that the installation sits on shall be subject to enforcement under the PA Crimes Code 18 Pa. C.S. §3304 Criminal Mischief and §3307 Institutional Vandalism.

E. The owner of the artwork installation shall indemnify the City, its officials, officers, employees and/or agents, from and against any and all third party claims related to the artwork installation.

SECTION 2. All ordinances or resolutions or parts of ordinances or resolutions insofar as they are inconsistent herewith are hereby repealed and rescinded.

SECTION 3. In the event any provision, section, sentence, clause or part of this Ordinance shall be held to be invalid, such invalidity shall not affect or impair any of the remaining provisions, sections, sentences, clauses or parts of this Ordinance; it being the intent of the City of Reading that the remainder of the Ordinance shall be and shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 4. This Ordinance shall become effective as provided by the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

DULY ORDAINED AND ENACTED this ____ day of _____, 2021, by the Council of the City of Reading, Berks County, Pennsylvania, in lawful session duly assembled.

President of Council

Attest:

City Clerk

Submitted to Mayor: _____

Date: _____

Received by the Mayor's Office: _____

Date: _____

Approved by Mayor: _____

Date: _____

Vetoed by Mayor: _____

Date: _____

Drafted by: City Clerk
Referred by: Mayor
Introduced on: July 12, 2021
Advertised on: N/A

**BILL ____-2021
AN ORDINANCE**

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CITY CODE CHAPTER 23 BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS, PART 12 DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP, SECTION 23-1201 AUTHORIZATION BY REPLACING THE DID CHAIR WITH THE CITY OF READING DESIGNATED DOWNTOWN COORDINATOR

THE CITY OF READING CITY COUNCIL HEREBY ORDAINS AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. Amending City Code Chapter 23 Boards and Commissions Part 1201 Downtown Revitalization Public Private Partnership, Section 23-1201 Authorization, as follows:

Part 12

Downtown Revitalization Public Private Partnership ¹⁸

[Adopted 7-23-2018 by Ord. No. 41-2018]

18. Former Chapter 23, Part 12, Main Street Program Board, repealed by Ord. No. 40-2018, adopted 7-23-2018.

§ 23-1201. Authorization.

[Amended 10-8-2018 by Ord. No. 66-2018]

The City Council recognizes the need to increase the economic momentum in the Central Business District of the City of Reading, Berks County, Pennsylvania (the "City") in and around Penn Street. The City desires to partner with the Greater Reading Chamber Alliance (GRCA) and use the resources and ability of the GRCA to administer an economic development strategy and initiatives including but not limited to the Main Street Program that will 1) promote a sense of community and unified purpose, 2) assure the historic continuity of the City's architectural heritage, 3) improve the image and perception of the City to residents and visitors and 4) strengthen economic rejuvenation of property and commerce for the benefit of all.

The Downtown Revitalization Public Private Partnership is hereby authorized and shall consist of nine voting members, serving voluntarily, to serve four year staggered terms, as follows:

- A member of City Council, initially serving a two year term, selected and appointed by City Council
- A representative of the Mayor's administration, initially serving a two year term, selected and appointed by the Mayor
- A representative of a large business, initially serving a four year term, selected and appointed by City Council
- A representative of a small business, initially serving a four year term, selected and appointed by the Mayor
- Two representatives from private entities, initially serving three and four year terms respectively, selected and appointed by the GRCA
- One citizen, who must be a City resident who is not employed, appointed or elected to any government position, initially serving a three year term, selected and appointed by the Mayor
- ~~The Chairman of the Downtown Improvement District Board of Directors~~ *The City Of Reading Designated Downtown Coordinator*
- The Executive Director of Downtown Revitalization, who shall be employed by the GRCA

Each appointing entity shall have the ability to select and appoint an alternate member who shall have the same term as the full member to attend meetings and participate in the member's absence.

Any appointment made after the effective date of the October 8, 2018 amendment that does not comply with any of the requirements and conditions as stated herein shall be considered null and void.

SECTION 2. This ordinance shall become effective ten (10) days after its adoption, in accordance with Sections 219 & 221 of the City of Reading Home Rule Charter.

Enacted July ____, 2021

President of Council

Attest:

City Clerk

Drafted by: City Clerk
Referred by: City Council
Introduced on: July 12, 2021
Advertised on: N/A

**BILL NO. _____2021
AN ORDINANCE**

AN ORDINANCE DIRECTING THE BERKS COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS TO PLACE A REFERENDUM QUESTION BEFORE CITY VOTERS ON THE 2021 GENERAL ELECTION BALLOT WHICH WOULD AMEND THE CITY OF READING HOME RULE CHARTER BY ELIMINATING THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE CITY'S PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR TO BE AN ENGINEER.

WHEREAS, Section 606(a) of the City of Reading Home Rule entitled Director of Public Works/City Engineer to have a director who is a professional civil engineer registered in Pennsylvania; and

WHEREAS, in November of 2009, the City of Reading was designated as financially distressed by the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) according to the criteria in the Municipalities Financial Recover Act (Act 47 of 1987); and

WHEREAS, the City has experienced difficulty filling senior positions where specialized, professional expertise is required; and

WHEREAS, the City of Reading remains in financially distressed status and desires to exit the Act 47 Recovery Program; and

WHEREAS, the City's Act 47 Recovery Coordinator cited the difficulty the City has had in filling key vacancies as leading to less capacity in critical areas and diminished effectiveness for the City organization overall.

NOW, THEREFORE, THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF READING HEREBY ORDAINS AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. Directing the Berks County Board of Elections to place the following referendum question to voters of the City of Reading on the 2021 general election ballot:

Home Rule Charter § 606. Department of Public Works/City Engineer.

“Shall Section 606(a) of the Reading Home Rule Charter be amended to eliminate the requirement for the Public Works Director to be a registered civil engineer?”

Simple Explanation

The current City Charter requires the City’s Public Works Director to be a professional civil engineer registered in Pennsylvania, who shall perform the duties required through the Administrative Code or other action, or as may be required of a City Engineer by general law. The proposed amendment would repeal the requirement for the Public Works Director to be a registered engineer.

SECTION 2. In the proposed amendment, the language of Charter Section 401(a) shall be deleted and replaced as follows:

§ 606. Department of Public Works.

(a) The Department of Public Works is mandated by this Charter. The Mayor shall appoint and fix the compensation of the head of the Department of Public Works/. He shall perform the duties required through the Administrative Code or other action, or as may be required by general law.

SECTION 3. This ordinance shall become effective ten (10) days after its adoption, in accordance with Section 221 of the City of Reading Home Rule Charter.

Enacted _____, 2021

President of Council

Attest:

City Clerk



City of Reading
Department of Public Works
Sustainability & Solid Waste

TO: Members of City Council

FROM: Steven Harrity

PREPARED BY: Madelin Collins

MEETING DATE: August 09, 2021

AGENDAMemo August 4, 2021

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Approve appropriation transfer

BACKGROUND:

This transfer is to deplete funds from Reading Beautification Inc. account line item and add the funds to the General Plant Supplies account line item to be able to purchase more clean-up/graffiti removal supplies due to an increase in city clean ups.

BUDGETARY IMPACT:

A transfer of \$10,000.00 from Solid Waste Fund 47; **56-07-47-4666** Reading Beautification to **56-07-47-4510** General Plant Supplies in Solid Waste Fund 47 to increase funds to cover purchases for clean-up and graffiti supplies.

PREVIOUS ACTION:

None

RECOMMENDED BY:

Charlie Jones, Public Works Director

RECOMMENDED MOTION:

Approve the request.

Drafted by Public Works
Sponsored by/Referred by Managing Director
Introduced on August 9, 2021

BILL NO. ____2021

AN ORDINANCE

AUTHORIZING AN APPROPRIATIONS TRANSFER WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS, SUSTAINABILITY & SOLID WASTE IN THE AMOUNT OF \$10,000.00 FOR BUDGET YEAR 2021.

THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF READING HEREBY ORDAINS AS FOLLOWS:

- Section One: Council hereby authorizes the transfer within the 2021 Department of Public Works, Sustainability & Solid Waste budget a transfer of \$10,000.00 from 56-07-47-4666 Reading Beautification to 56-07-47-4510 General Plant Supplies for the purpose of covering funds to purchase clean-up/graffiti supplies for increase city clean-ups.
- Section Two: This Ordinance shall become effective ten (10) days after its adoption in accordance with 219 and 221 of the Home Rule Charter of the City of Reading.

ENACTED _____, 2021

President of Council

ATTEST:

City Clerk

Submitted to Mayor by: _____
Date Submitted: _____
Received in Mayor's Office by: _____
Date Received: _____
Approved by Mayor: _____
Date Approved: _____
Vetoed by Mayor: _____
Date Vetoed: _____